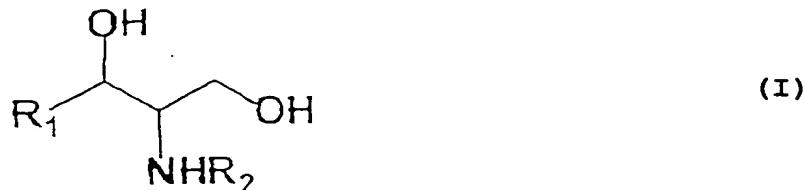


ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Provided is a clear aqueous ceramide composition comprising 1.0 to 5.0% by weight, based on the total composition, of a ceramide represented by formula (I):

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0010 wherein R<sub>1</sub> represents a hydrocarbon group having 9 to 17 carbon atoms; and R<sub>2</sub> represents an acyl group having 2 to 30 carbon atoms which can contain a hydroxyl group,  
0015 a long-chain fatty acid having 12 to 24 carbon atoms, a nonionic surface active agent, and water. The clear aqueous composition  
is useful as cosmetics, bath agents, hair-care products, external  
preparations for the skin, skin protective preparations,  
particular medical external preparations for the treatment  
or protection of the skin, or a component making up these  
preparations.

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